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C O N F I D E N T I A L VATICAN 005845

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/WE (MENNUITI); AF, AF/E
PLEASE PASS TO S/E DANFORTH, AMB. OAKLEY

FROM EMBASSY VATICAN/MESSAGE NO. 198/01

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/09/11

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SU](#) [VT](#)

SUBJECT: SANT'EGIDIO WANTS TO TALK TO S/E DANFORTH ABOUT
SUDAN OFF-SITE

REFS: A) KAMPALA 3571

B) NAIROBI 7097

C) VATICAN 5566

CONFIDENTIAL

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CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR, REASONS E.O. 12958 1.5(B), (D).

1. (U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST, PLEASE SEE NEXT PARA.

2. (C) SUMMARY: SANT'EGIDIO COMMUNITY HOPES TO HOST A
CONFIDENTIAL OFF-SITE DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE GOS AND SPLM

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TO UNBLOCK THE IGAD PROCESS. SANT'EGIDIO SUDAN EXPERT
RICCARDI, JUST BACK FROM KHARTOUM, WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK WITH
S/E DANFORTH AND/OR AMB. OAKLEY IN ROME IN DECEMBER.
ACTION REQUESTED: POST WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE ON
RESPONDING TO RICCARDI'S OFFER. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) FRESH BACK FROM HIS TRIP TO SUDAN, SANT'EGIDIO
SUDAN SPECIALIST FABIO RICCARDI (TOGETHER WITH MARIO GIRO,
SANT'EGIDIO'S WEST AFRICA SPECIALIST) WAS EAGER TO TALK
WITH EMBASSY VATICAN ABOUT HIS MEETINGS IN KHARTOUM. ON
11/09 RICCARDI TOLD DCM THAT SANT'EGIDIO HAS GOOD CONTACTS
WITH BOTH SIDES ON THE CONFLICT, AND THAT IT IS NOT
INTERESTED IN THE BLAME-GAME PRACTICED BY SOME OF SUDAN'S
CATHOLIC BISHOPS. HE SAID SANT'EGIDIO WISHES TO ENCOURAGE
DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE PARTIES AND BELIEVES THE POST 9/11
ATMOSPHERE OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES TO DO SO. HE REPLAYED
SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME POINTS IN REF A, FOCUSING ON THE
FACT THAT IGAD HAS STALLED, AND SOME CATALYST IS NEEDED TO
REINVIGORATE IT. HE SAID THAT NEITHER PARTY, BUT
ESPECIALLY THE GOS, TAKES IGAD SERIOUSLY -- MOSTLY THEY USE
IT TO SCORE PROPAGANDA POINTS ON EACH OTHER. RICCARDI
PROPOSES THAT SANT'EGIDIO HOST AT ITS HEADQUARTERS IN ROME
A SERIES OF CONFIDENTIAL FACE-TO-FACE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOS AND SPLM, WHICH WOULD PERMIT
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THEM TO "AGREE TO DISAGREE AND MOVE ON" (REF B), THUS
UNBLOCKING THE EXISTING PROCESS. (NOTE: THIS IS A FORMULA
WHICH WORKED TEN YEARS AGO WHEN SANT'EGIDIO MEDIATED THE
END TO THE MOZAMBIQUE CIVIL WAR).

2. (C) RICCARDI TOLD US THAT HE HAD RAISED HIS IDEA OF
PRIVATE OFF-SITE MEETINGS WITH SENIOR SUDANESE OFFICIALS,
INCLUDING GHAZZI SALAHADDIN AND THE FM (WHO HE SAID WAS
"STUPID"), NONE OF WHOM REJECTED IT. GARANG WOULD BE AN
OBSTACLE, HE SAID, INDICATING HE HAD SPOKEN WITH MUSEVENI
WHILE THE LATTER WAS IN LONDON, WHO GAVE HIM STRONG SIGNALS
THAT GARANG WOULD NEED PERSUADING. RICCARDI TOLD US THE
U.S. WOULD BE KEY, IF THIS PROPOSAL (WE HESITATE TO CALL IT
AN INITIATIVE) WERE TO GET OFF THE GROUND. IF GARANG COULD
BE PERSUADED, RICCARDI AND GIRO BOTH WERE CONFIDENT THEY
COULD GET MEANINGFUL GOS PARTICIPATION TOO.

3. (C) POST UNDERSTANDS THAT SPECIAL ENVOY DANFORTH AND
AF ARE CONTEMPLATING A VISIT TO EUROPEAN CAPITALS IN
DECEMBER. RICCARDI WOULD BE VERY INTERESTED IN MEETING THE
U.S. DELEGATION IF THAT WERE TO HAPPEN. WE SUPPORT SUCH A
MEETING AND REITERATE OUR OFFER (REF C) TO FACILITATE
MEETINGS BETWEEN THE S/E AND RICCARDI, AS WELL AS WITH ANY
OTHER INTERESTED VATICAN PARTIES.
NICHOLSON

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